



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
-----------------	-------------	----------------------	---------------------	------------------

10/675,351

09/30/2003

William T. Ball

P06545US0-144

5782

34082

7590

03/14/2006

ZARLEY LAW FIRM P.L.C.
CAPITAL SQUARE
400 LOCUST, SUITE 200
DES MOINES, IA 50309-2350

EXAMINER

PATEL, VISHAL A

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3673

DATE MAILED: 03/14/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/675,351

Applicant(s)

BALL, WILLIAM T.

Examiner

Vishal Patel

Art Unit

3673

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 14 December 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3 and 5-7 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3 and 5-7 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Art Unit: 3673

DETAILED ACTION

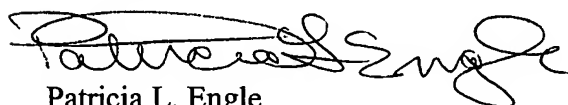
In view of the appeal brief filed on 12/14/05, PROSECUTION IS HEREBY REOPENED. A new grounds of rejection is set forth below.

To avoid abandonment of the application, appellant must exercise one of the following two options:

(1) file a reply under 37 CFR 1.111 (if this Office action is non-final) or a reply under 37 CFR 1.113 (if this Office action is final); or,

(2) initiate a new appeal by filing a notice of appeal under 37 CFR 41.31 followed by an appeal brief under 37 CFR 41.37. The previously paid notice of appeal fee and appeal brief fee can be applied to the new appeal. If, however, the appeal fees set forth in 37 CFR 41.20 have been increased since they were previously paid, then appellant must pay the difference between the increased fees and the amount previously paid.

A Supervisory Patent Examiner (SPE) has approved of reopening prosecution by signing below:



Patricia L. Engle

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

1. Claims 1-3 and 6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claim 1, line 5, "typically", this language makes the claim unclear. Unclear what applicant is trying to claim.

Claim 7, "a well", unclear if this is the one of the wells mentioned in claim 5.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

Art Unit: 3673

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

3. Claims 1-3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Gassmann et al (US. 4,917,407).

Gassmann discloses a pipe coupling for joining a first pipe to pipes of varying (intended use), comprising a first hollow fitting (fitting having 7) having opposite first and second ends (first and second ends of the first hollow fitting), with the first end (end having 25) being adapted for connection to a first pipe (first end having 25 is capable of being connected to a first pipe) and having a sleeve (sleeve having 11 and 10) with a inwardly crimped detent (detent 10 that prevents the connector from rotating), a second hollow fitting (fitting having 1 and 2) having first and second ends (second end receiving detent 10 in a groove) with the second end having a groove (the groove that receives the detent 10) for receiving the detent of the first hollow fitting to define a fluid conduit extending through interiors of the first and second hollow fittings, first and second adjacent wells in the second hollow fitting (wells formed in 1 on top distal end or bottom distal end, that is part of the second hollow connector), with the first well being adjacent the second end of the second fitting and having an upper end terminating in the first well, with both the first and second wells comprising at least a part of the fluid conduit, the first and second wells being cylindrical in shape with the second well having a diameter greater than the diameter of the first well (the first well and the second wall are part of the fluid conduit formed by the first and second hollow connector, the second well is adjacent the second end, an upper end of the second well terminates in the first well), *whereupon inlet pipes having outside diameters complimentary in size to the diameters of the wells can be selectively and alternately secured*

Art Unit: 3673

within the respective wells to fluidly connect such pipes to the fluid conduit and the first hollow fitting (intended use).

Regarding claim 2: The first and second wells have sidewalls adapted for being fixed secured to the inlet pipe (the wells are capable of being fixed to an inlet pipe).

Regarding claim 3: The first hollow fitting is comprised of metal and the second hollow fitting is comprised of plastic (the second hollow fitting is made of plastic).

Regarding claim 5: One of the first and second wells is adapted to secure a pressurized fluid supply pipe therein (the wells are capable of being fixed to a pressurized pipe).

Regarding claim 6: The first hollow fitting has means on its first end for coupling to a first pipe (means that are threads that connect pipe 3 to the first end of the first hollow fitting).

Regarding claim 7: A well is adapted to adhesively secure a pressurize fluid supply therein (the wells are capable of being fixed to a pressurized pipe by adhesive). Furthermore applicant has not claimed that the coupling has a well having adhesive but only that it is capable of having adhesive when one pipe is fixed into a well.

Response to Arguments

4. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-3 and 5-7 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

5. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Heeter teaches a first and second hollow fittings that form a straight conduit.

McPherson teaches to have a first fitting that is form of first material and a second fitting is from of a second material that is different than the first material.

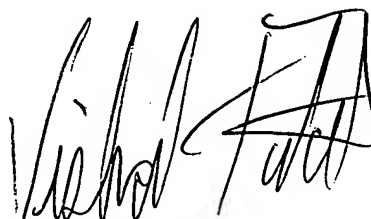
Art Unit: 3673

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Vishal Patel whose telephone number is 571-272-7060. The examiner can normally be reached on 6:30am to 8:00pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Patricia L. Engle can be reached on 571-272-6660. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

VP
February 24, 2006

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Vishal Patel', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Vishal Patel
Patent Examiner
Tech. Center 3600